



Earth Matters: an encyclopedia of ecology

Books Reviewed:

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~~Not a choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Here's another cut-and-paste assembly job from the leaders in that field. Encyclopedia of Ecology, eh? We'll see?

After an introduction to the origin of the universe, the book chops our bit of it into eco-regions (Polar, Desert, Oceans etc.) and looks at the characteristics of each, dwelling particularly on the changes induced by global warming and other human unbalancings. Captivating snaps with snappy captions predominate, and though these provide a lot of credible information, the apparent lack of system in their assembly promotes skipping, dipping and ? who knows ? tripping rather than a steady development of knowledge. And occasionally our confidence is jolted ? for instance when we're told ?to get the edible grain inside the husk, wheat must be winnowed.? No mention whatsoever of the all-important threshing. So how much more undetected duff gen is here?

Very much in the book's favour, though, is its emphasis on what we earthlings can do to mitigate our gallop to self-destruction. This is important, for as Ghandi said, ?You must be the change you wish to see in the world? and without such a practical element the encyclopedia would be but a horror story. Another invaluable element is the liberal sprinkling of ?did you know?? capsules; so this copy will end up being shared by our league-winning pub quiz team. It's good for eco-curious families too.

Oh, and David de Rothschild is an ?adventurer ecologist? who intends to sail from the USA to Australia on a raft of recycled plastic bottles ? there's a message there, somewhere.

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Source URL (retrieved on Jan '20): <http://savfikn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/171/childrens-books/reviews/earth-matters-an-encyclopedia-of-ecology>

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